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Police seeking illegal immigrants

Group comes ashore on Jupiter Island; four are caught, but several more thought to be at large

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Law enforcement officials were searching for additional illegal immigrants who might have come ashore on Jupiter

Island early Monday morning with four Haitian nationals who were apprehended and turned over to U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

As many as 12 immigrants

might have been dropped off on the beach about 3 a.m., said Robert Swathwood, a patrol agent with U.S. Customs and Border Protection. This is the fifth time in the past year authorities have captured immigrants on the island — one of America's richest towns.

Four people — two women and two men — were apprehended near Hobe Sound

Beach Park about 6 a.m., but another group of four or five people managed to hitch a ride in a pickup truck and flee the island, said Chief Ted J. Gonzales, of the Jupiter Island Department of Public Safety.

A Jupiter Island gardener reported seeing possibly another illegal immigrant, a woman in her mid- to late 20s, on Gomez Road about 8:30 a.m., but

she ran into the woods, Gonzales said.

The immigrants, thought to be of Haitian descent, were likely meeting up with friends or family members already living in the United States, Gonzales said.

About 1 p.m. Monday, his office stopped two people of in-

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Jupiter's 'Central Park' opens

Nature trail along Jones Creek dedicated Monday.

BY KIT BRADSHAW
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Jones Creek, a meandering waterway that begins near Paseos at Military Trail and Indian Creek Parkway, and eventually empties into the Loxahatchee River, provides some of the most beautiful natural areas in Jupiter.

The Jones Creek Hammock, located along Toney Penna Drive, now has a nature trail where visitors may enjoy a glimpse of the creek and vegetation that is part of the preserve.

On Monday, dignitaries and residents came to Jones Creek Hammock entrance, in the parking lot of the North County Aquatic Center, to officially open the trail through the natural vegetation that includes an oak hammock area, as well as palmetto and pines.

State Sen. Ken Pruitt called this 20-acre area the "Central Park of Jupiter," in his remarks during the dedication. Pruitt's funding efforts helped support the Loxahatchee River Preservation Initiative's program to help clean out Jones Creek.

David Brown, the town's utilities director, who also heads the initiative, said that about seven years ago, the LRPI invited Pruitt to take a short boat ride along Jones Creek; and because of this trip, Pruitt became committed to making Jones Creek better and in turn, helping the Loxahatchee River efforts as well.

"None of this happens without citizens, who make sure a project such as this comes in on budget and on time," said Pruitt. "It is important for citizens to have an opportunity to see, to touch, to enjoy this area that is part of the natural space in Jupiter."

The MacArthur Foundation gave the town the rights to the property in 1997, according to Mayor Karen Golonka.

"Because of the partnership with several entities, including the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, plus the efforts of Sen. Pruitt and David Brown, we now have this property as part of our open space program," said Golonka.

"With more urban area all around us, it is important to preserve this type of area. This is a special place."



Shawn Nieman, Town of Jupiter natural resources supervisor, leads a tour through the Jones Creek Hammock following the official dedication of the walking trail area on Monday afternoon. Left, the bridge that allows visitors a view of the natural area, including the slowly meandering Jones Creek, was a favorite spot for the crowds that toured the hammock after the opening of the nature trail Monday.

Photos by KIT BRADSHAW • kit.bradshaw@scripps.com

Couple helps flood victims

Husband and wife from Jupiter Island travel to Oklahoma for the Red Cross.

BY KIT BRADSHAW
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Richard Bonito and Sayre Santonelli could have stayed in their comfortable Jupiter Island condominium for the July Fourth holiday.

Instead, the husband and wife team — dispatched from the Palm Beach County Chapter of the American Red Cross — boarded a plane bound for flooded Oklahoma. Bonito and Santonelli joined more than 500 other Red Cross volunteers in the effort.

For the next two to three weeks, they plan to drive circuitous routes in that state, where they will be carrying clean water to flood victims. Their orders are to work in a kitchen, where they will hand out food to those who were forced to evacuate from their homes in the Bartlesville, Okla., area.

Answering our questions forwarded to them as they operated a truck this past week, they told us more about themselves and their mission.

Q. Where are you originally from, and how long have you been in this area?

A. Richard is retired from the Yonkers Police Department, where he was a police detective for 28 years. Sayre is a retired retail store owner from Massachusetts. For many years, we were snowbirds; but now we live here full time in a condominium on Jupiter Island.

Q. How long have you been involved in the Red Cross?

A. We decided to become volunteers with the Red Cross after Sept. 11, 2001, and joined in 2002. Originally, we were with the Asheville, N.C., Red Cross, but became part of the

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